

The School Readiness of Children Born to Low-Income, Adolescent Latinas in Miami

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Although studies show teenage parenting and low socioeconomic status predict poor child academic performance, limited research has examined relations between teen parenting and children's school readiness within low-income Latina mothers. In the context of the Miami School Readiness Project, low-income preschoolers ($N = 3,023$) attending subsidized child-care programs were assessed on cognitive, language, and fine motor skills, and parents and teachers reported on children's social skills and behavior concerns. Maternal teenage status at time of birth, maternal education, child attachment, child immigrant generational status, language, and other demographic variables were explored, as they uniquely and interactively predicted children's school readiness. Teenage parenting among low-income Latinas in this sample was less frequent (15%) than national estimates and more common among mothers born in the United States. Teen parenting was negatively associated with child cognitive and language competence at age 4, controlling for background variables. Maternal receipt of a high school diploma contributed additively, rather than interactively, to child outcomes. Parent-reported strong child attachment served as a buffer against the negative effects of teen parent status on child outcomes. Implications for intervention are discussed.

Latinos are the largest and fastest growing minority group in the United States, and many are living in less than ideal conditions (Ramirez, 2004). From 2000 to 2010, the Latino population increased by 43%, from about 35 million to 51 million, making up 16% of the U.S. population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Median family income for Latino families in 2009 was \$38,400, compared with \$54,500 for the overall U.S. population, and median income for Latina women was \$27,200, compared with \$36,000 for all women (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009). Moreover, about 27% of Latinos are living in poverty, including 32% of all Latino children under 18 years (Macartney, 2011; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). In terms of education, 62% of Latinos report having completed high school, compared with 87% for Caucasians and 84% for African Americans. Only 13% of Latinos obtain a graduate degree (compared with 30% and 19%, respectively; U.S. Census Bureau, 2009). Latino children often struggle in school, with high rates of school noncompletion, leading some scholars to advocate for a focus on school readiness and early childhood education among Hispanic families (Garcia, Jensen, & Scribner, 2009). Early departure from school is associated with teen pregnancy (National Campaign to Prevent Teen & Unplanned

Pregnancy, 2011), and adolescent childbearing is a risk factor for the development of offspring because of the teen mother's limited ability to cope with the demands of childrearing (Meadows-Oliver, Sadler, Swartz, & Ryan-Krause, 2007; Sadler & Cowlin, 2003). The present study links child school readiness to teen motherhood and maternal high school completion in the context of other relevant demographic variables with a large sample of low-income Latina mothers receiving subsidies for their children to attend child care in the ethnically and linguistically diverse community of Miami, Florida. Also examined is whether the effects of Latina teenage parenting on child school readiness are moderated by family immigration status or generation, language use in the home (Spanish or English), parent-child attachment, and maternal completion of high school.

Nationally, Latina adolescents are more likely to become pregnant as teenagers than Caucasians (Darabi, Dryfoos, & Schwartz, 1986; National Campaign to Prevent Teen & Unplanned Pregnancy, 2011). Current statistics indicate that nationwide, over 50% of Latinas will become pregnant at least once before the age of 20 (National Campaign to Prevent Teen & Unplanned Pregnancy, 2008). Although Caucasian females report a larger number of sexual partners than Latinas within the same time frame, Latinas report less use of contraception than Caucasian counterparts (Aneshensel, Fielder, & Becerra, 1989). A study that surveyed 1,789 high school students found that adolescent Latinas were at higher risk for unintended pregnancies than Caucasians (Brindis, Wolfe, McCarter, Ball, & Starbuck-Morales, 1995). The risk for unplanned early pregnancy increases when Latino adolescents are born outside of the United States. Only 20% of Latino

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immigrants reported that they “always” used contraceptives compared with 33% of U.S. native-born Latino and 35% of Anglo American adolescents (Nichols-Anderson, 2000). Although teen parenting may be a particular risk factor for children of recent or first-generation Latino immigrants, it is important to note that recent immigration can also serve as a protective factor for young children. Known as the *immigrant paradox*, child outcomes for second- and third-generation Latinos living in the United States are often poorer than for recent or first-generation immigrants, although one might expect later generations to do better than previous ones (García Coll & Marks, 2012; Rodriguez, 2002; Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 1995). Recent immigrant families tend to view education as more valuable (Olmeda, 2003), have greater achievement motivation, and perceive fewer impediments to obtaining their goals than later Latino generations (Hill, Ramirez, & Dumka, 2003).

The fact that rates of teen parenting among Latinas vary by maternal nativity and immigrant generational status suggests the need to examine teenage parenting among Latinas with careful attention being paid to the cultural, language, family, community, and generational contexts. Indeed, the bioecological model stresses the importance of studying development in the environment in which it occurs, because contexts are numerous and diverse and vary from one individual to the next (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). Interactions between the child and her environment, such as teen parent-child interactions, or *proximal processes*, happen over time and are typically the primary mechanism of human development (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). However, these proximal interactions affecting child development happen within the larger family, community, and cultural context. Things also change over time, meaning that the chronosystem also plays a role, both in terms of ontogenetic change during the early childhood years and in terms of time on a larger scale, such as generation (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). The present study examines child outcomes for teenage parents within a particular cultural community and examines whether links between teen parenting status and child school readiness are different for first-, second-, and third+-generation Latina families.

Community context is also important. There is extreme heterogeneity within the families that all fit under the gross panethnic term of *Latino* (Mattis, 2002). Most of the previous research on Latina teen parenting (and on Latino child outcomes) has used regional samples from California or the American Southwest that are predominantly of Mexican origin, or they have used largely Puerto Rican samples in the New York City area (Brindis et al., 1995; Nichols-Anderson, 2000; Olmeda, 2003; Weinman & Smith, 1994). National Latino samples also tend to overrepresent Mexican-origin families (Brindis et al., 1995). The current investigation explores the early childhood outcomes of children from Latina teenage mothers in the unique and understudied context of Miami-Dade County, Florida, the only county in the United States where the foreign-born are the majority of the population (51%; U.S. Census Bureau, 2003). Miami enjoys strong sociolinguistic support for the Spanish language, and the Latinos who reside there are predominantly Cuban, Caribbean, and Central and South American in origin.

Teenage Parenting and Child Outcomes

Teenage parenting is a risk factor for the development of both the young mother and her child (Meadows-Oliver et al., 2007; Sadler & Cowlin, 2003). Unlike adult mothers, adolescent mothers have yet to reach the developmental maturity that allows them to care optimally for their child. In the developmental stages described by Erikson (1968), adolescence is the time to build identity. Past experiences and social interactions coupled with physical and sexual development shape the sense of self that teenagers acquire. Teenagers learn to develop close relationships with others while simultaneously dealing with a sense of isolation (Erikson, 1963). Working to build an identity, understand sexual development, and interact with other individuals may become increasingly difficult for teenagers who are also coming to terms with parenthood, which could, in turn, interfere with the quality of care the child receives. The cognitive developmental level of adolescents is not ideal for parenting, exacerbating a young mother's capacity to cope and solve parenting-related issues (Sadler & Cowlin, 2003). Sadler and Cowlin state that teenage identity formation conflicts with motherhood in four primary areas: (a) identity, (b) independence and individuation, (c) cognitive development, and (d) sexual development. The time required for parenting limits the adolescent's ability to explore her newly split identity as mother and adolescent, adding to already heightened stress experienced by many young mothers (Sadler & Cowlin, 2003). Other stressors, such as unemployment or an unfinished education, can also lead to emotional difficulties, such as low self-esteem and depression (Meadows-Oliver et al., 2007). Strain from adolescent development coupled with parenthood may hinder the all-important mother-child interactions that occur between teenage mothers and their children (Meadows-Oliver et al., 2007).

The attachment bond that emerges from sensitive mother-child interactions is likely to be important in determining developmental outcomes for the children of teen parents. Attachment involves interactions and behaviors that predict proximity between the child and a few primary (typically parents) and secondary (grandparent or preschool teacher) caregivers (Ainsworth, 1989; Bowlby, 1982). Proximity increases the likelihood that a child will be cared for and protected by the caregiver with whom she or he creates an attachment (Ainsworth, 1989). It is important for parents to display sensitive, responsive care to their children to promote healthy psychological development through secure attachment, characterized by an accessible, demonstrative, and responsive parent-child relationship by which children learn to depend and trust their primary caregivers (Ainsworth, 1989; Hungerford & Cox, 2006). If children perceive the parent-child relationship as stable or secure, then they are more likely to cope well with separation and explore their environment, activities essential for children to feel comfortable outside the home environment and to serve as a foundation for optimal development (Ainsworth, 1989; Bowlby, 1982).

Unfortunately, parents are not always able to exhibit such quality care and responsiveness, and failing to do so interferes with the formation of a secure attachment (Bowlby, 1988). Rates of insecure mother-child attachment between teenage mothers and their children have been found to be significantly

higher (50%) than those of normative samples (20%–25%; Spieker & Bensley, 1994; Ward & Carlson, 1995). In the case of low-income, teenage mothers, multiple factors (i.e., unfinished education, unemployment, poverty) serve as obstacles for providing their children with excellent care. Heightened stress and weakened parent–child attachment can hinder ties necessary for children’s optimal development and consequent school readiness (Bowlby, 1988). Adolescent mothers may be less able to react sensitively to children’s needs and thus constrain the development of secure attachment (Bowlby, 1988; Meadows-Oliver et al., 2007; Sadler & Cowlin, 2003). For these reasons, we examine the potential role of child attachment in links between teenage parenting and child outcomes. Both a mediation pathway (teen parenting may lead to low parent–child attachment, which then leads to poor child outcomes) and a moderation effect (teen parenting is only bad for child outcomes when poor parent–child attachment is present) seem plausible. Although prior research shows poor attachment as a potential outcome of teen parenting, along with several other negative outcomes, to our knowledge, prior research has not explored mediational or moderational roles for attachment in links between teen parenting and child outcomes, certainly not among Latina mothers. We therefore test both possibilities in the present study in an exploratory fashion.

Poor parent–child attachment is also linked with limited parental language stimulation to the child, which can lead to delays in the child’s language development, their age-appropriate use of objects during infancy, and their cognitive, motor, and socioemotional development (De Wolff & van IJzendoorn, 1997; Flom & Pick, 2003; Keown, Woodward, & Field, 2001). Each of these areas is fundamental for children’s school readiness and eventual academic success (Denham, 2006; Snow, 2006). Mothers play a major role in stimulating the language development of their children (Olson, Bates, & Bayles, 1984). Adolescent mothers use limited language with their child and engage in less verbal encouragement during mother–child interactions (Luster & Mittelstaedt, 1993). Language development of children born to teenage mothers is delayed compared with children of older mothers (Keown et al., 2001; Wadsworth, Taylor, Osborn, & Butler, 1984). Teenage mothers tend to be more intrusive and less verbally stimulating, sensitive, and affectionate with their children than older mothers (Barratt & Roach, 1995; Culp, Culp, Osofsky, & Osofsky, 1991).

In addition to any effects that teenage parenting may have on children’s first language, second language development could be impacted as well. For instance, Latina teenage mothers may have limited English proficiency, given their young age and the disruptions in formal (English) education associated with teenage childrearing, exposing their child to less advanced English vocabulary and possibly delaying the child’s English (L2) development (Meadows-Oliver et al., 2007). Limited English proficiency on the part of the parent and the child is a risk factor for the school readiness of young Latino children (Zill & Collins, 1996). Children’s oral language skills and vocabulary in English and Spanish are strongly related to their cognitive and literacy skills and future academic success (August & Hakuta, 1997; Lonigan, Burgess, & Anthony, 2000; Walker, Greenwood, Hart, & Carta, 1994). The children of Latina teenage parents may be particularly affected by limited

parental language input within the context of less frequent reading and fewer literacy-relevant activities in the homes of Latino families that have been reported by some (Boyce et al., 2004; Yarosz & Barnett, 2001).

Language used in the home can also interact with the family’s immigrant status in predicting early child outcomes among dual-language learners. Using Early Childhood Longitudinal Studies-birth cohort data and examining all dual-language learners from many different countries of origin and heritage languages, Winsler et al. (2012) recently showed that several immigrant advantage effects (children of immigrant parents outperforming those of native-born mothers) in the domains of cognition and social skills were either stronger or only present when the heritage language (as opposed to only English) was spoken in the home. Therefore, in the present study, we examined the roles of both child and parent first language among the children of teenage Latina mothers as well as exploring whether primary language (English or Spanish) moderates relations between teen parent status and children’s school readiness.

Poverty and low maternal education, risk factors common among teenage parents and among Latino families in general, are also associated with poor child outcomes. Higher socioeconomic status (SES) is associated with more sensitive and engaging mother–child interactions (Hungerford & Cox, 2006; National Institute of Child Health & Human Development Early Child Care Research Network, 2000). Parents with greater education tend to hold more realistic expectations for their children than less-educated parents, who tend to overestimate their children’s performance (Alexander, Entwisle, & Bedinger, 1994). Accurate expectations help parents mold the home and school environment in ways that stimulate optimal development. Mothers with higher education expect greater academic performance from their children and display more achievement-related behavior in the home compared with less-educated mothers (Halle, Kurtz-Costes, & Mahoney, 1997). Educated mothers are more likely to read to children, be verbally responsive, and to adopt teaching strategies that resemble formal instruction, such as providing more contingent responses and asking questions rather than giving commands (Hoff-Ginsberg, 1998; Raviv, Kessenich, & Morrison, 2004; Tracey & Young, 2002). Although maternal education is often more strongly related to children’s academic achievement than family income (Duncan, Brooks-Gunn, & Klebanov, 1994), family income is also a unique contributor to children’s school readiness (Dearing, McCartney, & Taylor, 2001). In the present study, we examined both family income-to-needs ratio and maternal education as both predictors and control variables of children’s outcomes at age 4 within our already predominantly low-income, child-care-subsidy-receiving sample. Although the attainment of a high school diploma (or GED) is obviously an important and commonly used educational threshold in teen parenting and maternal education research (Magnuson, Meyers, Ruhm, & Waldfogel, 2004), we also examine whether the attainment of some amount of post-high school education matters for child outcomes among this population, given recent studies that the distinction between high school versus some amount of postsecondary or college education can also be important (Magnuson, Sexton, Davis-Kean, & Huston, 2009).

The Present Study

In the current study, we examine teenage parenting and children's school readiness outcomes at age 4 (in the context of relevant background variables, including family immigration or nativity status, child primary language, maternal education and income, and child gender and age) within a large, predominantly low-income Latino sample. School readiness in the context of this project, consistent with contemporary perspectives (Denham, 2006; Snow, 2006), is defined as a combination of children's competencies in cognitive, language, fine motor, behavioral, and socioemotional skills that are associated with enhanced performance upon school entry. We used data from the Miami School Readiness Project, a large-scale, university-community collaboration and applied research project (Winsler et al., 2008). Preschool-age children receiving subsidies to attend child care were individually assessed on their cognitive, language, and motor skills. In addition, parents and teachers evaluated children's socioemotional skills, attachment, and behavior. The following research questions were addressed: (a) How common is teenage childbearing among Latina mothers of 3- and 4-year-old children receiving subsidies to attend child care in Miami, and does the frequency of teen parenting vary by family generational status and maternal primary language? (b) To what extent is children's school readiness (cognitive, language, fine motor, social, and behavioral skills) related to teen parent status, controlling for relevant demographic variables? We expected child outcomes to be poorer across the board if mothers gave birth to the target child as a teen. (c) How does maternal education, uniquely and interactively when combined with teen parenting, predict child outcomes? We hypothesized that children of teen parents who also did not complete high school would show the poorest outcomes and that both maternal education and teen parenting would explain unique variance in child outcomes. (d) Are relations between teen parenting and child outcomes either mediated or moderated by parent-reported child attachment? (e) To what extent are relations between teen parent status and child outcomes the same for families with different immigration histories (native, first generation, and second generation) and with different primary languages (English or Spanish)? Given the lack of prior research and their exploratory nature, we did not have hypotheses about the latter two research questions.

Method

Participants

Participants included 3,023 3- to 4-year-old children of Latina mothers participating in the Miami School Readiness Project in the fall of 2003 (De Feyter & Winsler, 2009; Winsler et al., 2008). Families were 150% below the poverty line and qualified for and received subsidies to attend child care in the community or Title I public school pre-K. The children were 48% female and averaged 48 months of age at time of assessment (beginning of school year). Families were included in this research if the mother identified herself as *Latina/Hispanic* on an initial child-care intake form. Almost all mothers

reported that their child was also Hispanic/Latino (95%) on the same form, with 3% reporting the child as Black (including Caribbean and Haitian), and 2% as Caucasian/White/non-Hispanic. About 90% of parents were unmarried (single, divorced, or separated), and the sample was of very low income ($M = \$16,454$, $SD = \$7,560$). The highest level of education attained for most parents was a high school diploma or GED (77%), whereas 19% did not graduate high school, and 4% had completed a year or more of college. The majority of mothers (77%) reported Spanish as their primary language. Of child-mother dyads who had sufficient country of birth data from the demographics form to determine child generation ($n = 1,533$), approximately 10% of children were first-generation immigrants having been born themselves in another country, 58% were second-generation immigrants (mother born abroad, child born in the United States), and 32% were in the third or later generation, meaning the mother was U.S. born. Parents had consented to participate and to have their children assessed as part of the countywide evaluation program, and they received parent-friendly individualized reports of their child's assessment results in either English or Spanish.

Measures

Learning Accomplishment Profile-Diagnostic. The Learning Accomplishment Profile-Diagnostic (LAP-D; Nehring, Nehring, Bruni, & Randolph, 1992) is a norm-referenced, standardized instrument used to directly assess children's abilities in four domains: (a) cognitive, (b) language, (c) fine motor, and (d) gross motor. Children's scores from only the first three domains were used for this study for reasons that were conceptual (desired focus on preacademic skills), practical (data reduction), and methodological (the gross motor subscale that year was administered less reliably by a different assessor—the child's teacher). The county's multiagency, early childhood assessment taskforce selected the assessment tools because they fit well with local early learning standards, were available in Spanish and English, were well-established measures, and technology was available for large-scale administration and reporting. The LAP-D shows high reliability both in the national standardization sample ($\alpha = .76-.92$; Nehring et al., 1992) and in the present Miami sample ($\alpha = .93-.95$; Winsler et al., 2008). Additional details are available in the study by Winsler et al. (2008).

Bilingual assessors, who were MA-level educational or school psychologists or social workers, participated in multiday training session on the LAP-D conducted by the publishers and developers. These independent assessors administered the LAP-D to the children individually and in a separate room of the child-care center for a session lasting typically 1 hr. Assessments were administered to children early in the school year (September–October). National percentile scores are used and reported. Assessors gave the LAP-D in either English (28%) or Spanish (72%), whichever language was stronger for the child as determined by teacher report or assessor decision after speaking to the child in both languages. In the analyses, this variable, language of administration of the LAPD, indicating

the child's strongest language, was used for child primary language.

Devereux Early Childhood Assessment. The Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA; LeBuffe & Naglieri, 1999), a widely used assessment of children's socioemotional and behavioral strengths, was completed by the child's teacher and parent during the same fall time period. Adults rated how often the child engaged in 37 behaviors in the last 4 weeks on a 5-point Likert scale, 0 (*never*), 1 (*rarely*), 2 (*occasionally*), 3 (*frequently*), and 4 (*very frequently*). Three subscales, initiative, self-control, and attachment, when summed become a total socioemotional protective factors scale, and there is a separate, stand-alone, behavioral concerns scale with no subscales. Initiative taps children's capacity to employ independent thought and action to serve needs and included items such as "start or organize play with other children." Self-control focuses on the child's ability to experience and express emotions through words and actions in a socially appropriate manner, like "listen to or respect others." Attachment measures the degree to which the relationship between the child and significant adults is mutual, strong, and pervasive, including items such as "acts happy or excited when parent/guardian returned." The DECA is reported by the developers to have internal consistency reliability of .91 (parent) and .94 (teacher) for total protective factors and .71 (parent) and .80 (teacher) for behavior concerns. Instrument authors also mention criterion-related validity in differentiating children with socioemotional problems from children with normal development (LeBuffe & Naglieri, 1999). Reliability of the DECA for this ethnically diverse sample was .92 (parent) and .94 (teacher) for total protective factors and .72 (parent) and .81 (teacher) for behavioral concerns. Reliability did not vary by language of form (Spanish or English) or rater (parent, teacher; Crane, Mincic, & Winsler, 2011). National percentiles scores are used and reported here. The parent-report of child attachment is used for the analyses here having to do with parent-child attachment, and both parent and teacher scores for total socioemotional protective factors and behavior concerns are used for analyses of sociobehavioral outcomes.

Maternal age, education, and language. Maternal date of birth and years of education were obtained via self-report upon registration for subsidized child-care services. Maternal age at target child's birth was calculated using the target child's date of birth, assessment date, and child's age in months at time of assessment. This continuous measure of maternal age was then categorized into two groups: (a) teen parent = mother being 19 years of age or younger at the target child's birth (15%, $n = 443$) or (b) adult parent = mother being 20 years of age or older at the time of child's birth (85%, $n = 2,580$). Mothers' education was given in years. We classified mothers as having less than a high school education for those with education years less than 12 (19%, $n = 567$), as a high school diploma (or GED) for values of 12 (77%, $n = 2,323$), and as post-high school or some college for those with more than 12 (4%, $n = 129$). This variable was then dummy coded with 12 years as the reference group. Maternal self-reported primary language (*English* = 1, *Spanish* = 0) was obtained from the same subsidy child-care intake form.

Results

Prevalence of Teen Parenting

The first research question asked how common teen parenting would be in this sample and whether it varied by immigrant group and primary language of mother. Overall, 15% ($n = 443$) of Latina mothers in this sample of child-care-subsidy-receiving families with a preschooler in Miami were aged 19 or below when the target child was born. Teen parent status did vary considerably by generation: 6% for first-generation children born outside the United States, 8% for second-generation immigrants, and 29% for third- or later generation children of Latina mothers, $\chi^2(2, N = 1,533) = 118.7, p < .001$. Teen parenting was also more common among Latina mothers who reported English as their primary language (26%) when compared with Spanish (11%), $\chi^2(2, N = 3,022) = 89.0, p < .001$.

Teen Parent Status and Child School Readiness

Table 1 provides the means, standard deviations, and bivariate correlations for the major variables involved in the study. The extent to which teen parenting uniquely predicted aspects of school readiness among children of low-income Latina mothers, our second research question, was examined using a series of hierarchical multiple regression models. Results are presented in Tables 2–8, with each table corresponding to a different outcome variable. Each model contained two sets of control variables to investigate the influence of teen parenting above and beyond demographic factors. Child-level factors were entered first and included age, gender, and the language in which the child was assessed (and deemed to be the strongest; English or Spanish). Family demographics were entered in a second step and included income-to-needs ratio, maternal language (English or Spanish), maternal education (<12 years, 12 years, or >12 years), and immigrant generation (first, second, or third). The key row to examine in the tables to answer this question is Block 3, when teen parenting status was added.

For language skills (Table 2), several demographic factors were important for predicting language, including gender (female, $\beta = .11$), income-to-needs ratio ($\beta = .09$), immigrant generation (second generation as compared to third, $\beta = .09$), language of child assessment (English, $\beta = .08$), and maternal education (at least 12 years, $\beta = .08$). Above and beyond these demographic factors, teen parenting had a significant (and similarly sized) negative association with child language skills ($\beta = -.06$). Similar factors were important for predicting child cognitive skills (Table 3): gender (female, $\beta = .13$), income-to-needs ratio ($\beta = .09$), language of child assessment (English, $\beta = .08$), child age ($\beta = -.05$), and maternal education (at least 12 years, $\beta = .06$). Teen parenting also significantly predicted child cognitive skills, while controlling for the other factors at about the same effect size ($\beta = -.06$).

For fine motor skills, and child social and behavioral skills as rated by both teacher and parent (Tables 4–8), teen parent status did not uniquely add to the prediction of outcomes after all the demographic variables were included. Demographic variables continued to predict these child school readiness outcomes in predictable ways: Girls typically outperformed boys,

Table 1. Correlations, Means, and Standard Deviations for Key Variables

	Maternal education	Maternal language	Income-needs	Immigrant family	Child language	Child attachment	LAP-D cognitive	LAP-D language	LAP-D fine motor	DECA-P social	DECA-P behavior	DECA-T social	DECA-T behavior
Maternal education	-.01												
Maternal language	.16*	-.01											
Income-needs	.03	-.51*	.01										
Immigrant family	.00	.33*	-.02	-.40*									
Child language	.11*	-.02	.07*	.00	-.03								
Child attachment	.06*	.03	.10*	.04	.08*	.08*							
L-D cognitive	.06*	.05*	.10*	-.08*	.10*	.09*	.58*						
L-D language	.06*	-.02	.08*	.06*	.04*	.08*	.55*	.48*					
L-D fine motor	.14*	-.03	.07*	.06	-.03	.80*	.12*	.16*	.13*				
D-P social	.02	.02	-.05*	.01	.01	-.12*	-.03	-.09*	-.08*				
D-P behavior	.08*	-.03	.10*	.04	.01	.15*	.22*	.24*	.24*	-.15*			
D-T social	-.01	.04*	-.07*	-.12*	.01	-.09*	-.15*	-.14*	-.20*	-.15*	.24*	-.40*	
D-T behavior	11.6	.23	5,514	.68	.28	47.3	40.2	26.6	48.3	46.5	73.7	49.3	57.4
M	1.7	.42	2,544	.47	.45	27.2	26.4	23.0	28.6	31.0	26.7	27.8	28.5
SD													

**p* < .05.

Table 2. Hierarchical Regression Model Predicting LAPD Language Scores

	Step 1 β	Step 2 β	Step 3 β	Step 4 β
Block 1: Child demographics				
Child age (months)	.05	.05	.05	.05
Child gender (female)	.11*	.11*	.11*	.11*
Lang of assessment (English)	.10*	.08*	.08*	.08*
Block 2: Family demographics				
Income-to-needs ratio		.08*	.09*	.09*
Maternal language (English)		.00	.01	.01
<12 years ed (12 years as ref.)		-.09*	-.08*	-.08*
>12 years ed (12 years as ref.)		.01	.00	.00
First generation (third generation as ref.)		.03	.02	.02
Second generation (third generation as ref.)		-.08*	-.09*	-.09*
Block 3: Teen parenting status				
Teen parent			-.06*	-.07*
Block 4: Interaction term				
Teen parent × generation (first vs. second)				-.45*
Teen parent × generation (first vs. third)				-.60*
Adj. <i>R</i> ²	.022	.045	.047	.067
Δ <i>R</i> ²	.024*	.027*	.003*	.021*

**p* < .05.

Table 3. Hierarchical Regression Model Predicting LAPD Cognitive Scores

	Step 1 β	Step 2 β	Step 3 β	Step 4 β
Block 1: Child demographics				
Child age (months)	-.05*	-.05*	-.05*	-.05*
Child gender (female)	.13*	.13*	.13*	.13*
Lang of assessment (English)	.08*	.08*	.08*	.08*
Block 2: Family demographics				
Income-to-needs ratio		.09*	.09*	.09*
Maternal language (English)		-.01	.00	.00
<12 years ed (12 years as ref.)		-.06*	-.05	-.05
>12 years ed (12 years as ref.)		.01	.00	.00
First generation (third generation as ref.)		.03	.02	.02
Second generation (third generation as ref.)		-.03	-.04	-.04
Block 3: Teen parenting status				
Teen parent			-.06*	-.06*
Block 4: mediation				
Attachment				.07*
Adj. <i>R</i> ²	.024	.035	.037	.037
Δ <i>R</i> ²	.026*	.015*	.003*	.004*

**p* < .05.

older children did better than younger children, children of mothers who completed high school did better than those who did not, and family income was often positively associated with school readiness. It is worth noting that it was maternal completion of 12 years of education that appeared to be important for child school readiness and not additional education after that. Also worth noting was that maternal primary language

Table 4. Hierarchical Regression Model Predicting LAPD Fine Motor Scores

	Step 1 β	Step 2 β	Step 3 β	Step 4 β
Block 1: Child demographics				
Child age (months)	.03	.02	.02	.02
Child gender (female)	.21*	.21*	.21*	.21*
Lang of assessment (English)	.04	.07*	.07*	.07*
Block 2: Family demographics				
Income-to-needs ratio		.07*	.07*	.07*
Maternal language (English)		.01	.01	.01
<12 years ed (12 years as ref.)		-.07*	-.07*	-.07*
>12 years ed (12 years as ref.)		-.01	-.01	-.01
First generation (third generation as ref.)		.09*	.09*	.09*
Second generation (third generation as ref.)		.08*	.08*	.08*
Block 3: Teen parenting status				
Teen parent			.00	.00
Block 4: Interaction term				
Teen parent \times generation (first vs. second)				-.46*
Teen parent \times generation (first vs. third)				-.60*
Adj. R^2	.043	.058	.057	.077
ΔR^2	.045*	.019*	.000	.021*

* $p < .05$.**Table 5.** Hierarchical Regression Model Predicting DECA-Teacher TPF Ratings

	Step 1 β	Step 2 β	Step 3 β	Step 4 β
Block 1: Child demographics				
Child age (months)	.10*	.09*	.09*	.09*
Child gender (female)	.19*	.19*	.19*	.19*
Lang of assessment (English)	.00	.02	.02	.05
Child attachment	.15*	.14*	.14*	.12*
Block 2: Family demographics				
Income-to-needs ratio		.09*	.09*	.09*
Maternal language (English)		.00	.00	.00
<12 years ed (12 years as ref.)		-.03	-.03	-.04
>12 years ed (12 years as ref.)		.01	.01	.00
First generation (third generation as ref.)		.09*	.09*	.10*
Second generation (third generation as ref.)		.03	.03	.03
Block 3: Teen parenting status				
Teen parent			.00	.04
Block 4: Interaction term				
Teen parent \times child attachment				.58*
Adj. R^2	.045	.058	.057	.169
ΔR^2	.047*	.018*	.000	.09*

* $p < .05$.

was never associated with child outcomes after accounting for child language of assessment. Immigrant generation was importantly related to most indicators of child school readiness. The pattern was the same across several different outcomes—children whose families more recently immigrated to the United

States were often doing better than those with mothers born in the United States.

Education and Teen Parent Status

To address our third research question regarding whether completion of high school interacted with maternal teen parent status in predicting child outcomes, that is, whether teen parenting is only bad for child outcomes when the mother does not complete high school, we added the multiplicative interaction of these two variables as an additional Block 4 in the same series of multiple regressions reported in the tables. In no case did high school completion interact with teen parent status (results not included in the tables). Maternal education and age, thus, each appear to have only additive effects on child school readiness.

Attachment as Mediator or Moderator

To examine the mediation aspect of question 4, to see whether a portion of the relationship between teen parenting and school readiness could be attributed to group differences in parent-reported child attachment, a model was run with attachment entered in Block 4. We then observed whether including child attachment reduced the coefficient for teen parenting, which would suggest that at least some of the relationship was because of attachment differences between children of teen and adult mothers. This model was run for cognitive and language skills only—the two outcomes for which a significant relationship with teen parenting was found (Tables 1 and 2). Attachment did not account for a portion of the relationship between teen parenting and either outcome—the coefficients for teen parenting remained the same when child attachment was included. Attachment did, however, uniquely and positively predict language and cognitive skills.

To examine whether teen parenting was bad for child outcomes only when child attachment to mother was low, that is, child attachment as a moderator of relations between teen parent status and child school readiness, parent-reported child attachment was added along with the interaction term (teen parent \times attachment) in a separate Block 4. For teacher-reported child social skills and behavior problems and for parent-reported behavior problems, the interaction term was significant (Tables 5, 6, and 8). Further exploration of these interactions revealed that, for all three outcomes, as hypothesized, when children were high in attachment with their mother, differences in child socioemotional skills and behavior between children of teen vs. adult parents were minimal. However, when the child demonstrated poor attachment, children of teen parents showed poorer social skills and behavior relative to those with adult parents.

Language or Immigration as Moderator

Our final question had to do with whether relations between teen parent status and child school readiness were different for families with different immigration backgrounds or language preferences. To assess whether relations differed by the child's strongest language (English, Spanish), we added interaction

Table 6. Hierarchical Regression Model Predicting DECA-Teacher Behavior Concerns Ratings

	Step 1 β	Step 2 β	Step 3 β	Step 4 β	Step 5 β
Block 1: Child demographics					
Child age (months)	-.15*	-.14*	-.14*	-.14*	-.15*
Child gender (female)	-.23*	-.23*	-.23*	-.23*	-.23*
Lang of assessment (English)	.02	-.03	-.03	-.02	-.02
Child attachment				-.08*	
Block 2: Family demographics					
Income-to-needs ratio		-.07*	-.07*	-.07*	-.07*
Maternal language (English)		-.03	-.03	-.03	-.03
<12 years ed (12 years as ref.)		-.02	-.01	-.02	-.02
>12 years ed (12 years as ref.)		.01	.01	.01	.01
First generation (third generation as ref.)		-.14*	-.15*	-.15*	.10*
Second generation (third generation as ref.)		-.14*	-.15*	-.15*	.22*
Block 3: Teen parenting status					
Teen parent			-.05	-.04	-.05
Block 4: Interaction term					
Teen parent \times child attachment				-.13*	
Block 5: Interaction term					
Teen parent \times generation (first vs. second)					.40*
Teen parent \times generation (first vs. third)					.48*
Adj. R^2	.072	.089	.091	.10	.11
ΔR^2	.075*	.022*	.002	.005*	.016*

* $p < .05$.

Table 7. Hierarchical Regression Model Predicting DECA-Parent TPF Ratings

	Step 1 β	Step 2 β	Step 3 β	Step 4 β
Block 1: Child demographics				
Child age (months)	.05	.04	.04	.04
Child gender (female)	.07	.07*	.07*	.07*
Lang of assessment (English)	-.04	-.02	-.02	-.02
Block 2: Family demographics				
Income-to-needs ratio		.04	.04	.04
Maternal language (English)		.01	.01	.01
<12 years ed (12 years as ref.)		-.13*	-.14*	-.14*
>12 years ed (12 years as ref.)		.02	.02	.02
First generation (third generation as ref.)		.07*	.08*	.08*
Second generation (third generation as ref.)		.05	.06	.06
Block 3: Teen parenting status				
Teen parent			.04	.02
Block 4: Interaction term				
Teen parent \times child attachment				.03
Adj. R^2	.005*	.026*	.026	.025
ΔR^2	.008	.027	.001	.000

* $p < .05$.

terms in Block 4 (teen parent \times child assessment language) for each outcome. Language of assessment did not interact with teen parenting in predicting any of the school readiness outcomes (not tabled). We then did the same thing for generation status to determine whether the influence of teen motherhood on child school readiness was similar across first-generation, second-generation, and third (or later)-generation children. We

found four significant interactions for language skills ($\Delta R^2 = .02, p < .001$), fine motor skills ($\Delta R^2 = .02, p < .001$), and both teacher-reported ($\Delta R^2 = .02, p < .001$) and parent-reported behavioral concerns ($\Delta R^2 = .01, p < .001$). For each of these four outcomes, the influence of teen parenting on children's skills depended somewhat on the child's generation; however, the particular pattern varied across outcomes. For language skills, there was no difference between children of teen and adult parents within the first generation, but children of teen parents scored lower than those of adult parents within the second and third generations. For fine motor skills, children of first-generation teen parents actually demonstrated slightly stronger fine motor skills than first-generation children of adult parents, whereas they scored lower within the other two generations. A similar result was found for parent-rated behavior concerns, for which the third generation was the only group within which children of teen parents were rated as having fewer behavior concerns than children of adult parents. Finally, for teacher-rated behavior concerns, children of teen parents were rated as having more behavior concerns than children of adult parents within the first and third generations, but there were no differences among second-generation children. Given small effect sizes and some small cell sizes for teen parenting in first-generation children, it is important not to overinterpret these interactions.

Discussion

The goal of the present study was to examine relations between teenage parenting and multiple dimensions of child school readiness among a large sample of low-income Latino children attending subsidized child-care programs in Miami. Among this specialized sample of low-income Latino families

Table 8. Hierarchical Regression Model Predicting DECA-Parent Behavior Concerns Ratings

	Step 1 β	Step 2 β	Step 3 β	Step 4 β	Step 5 β
Block 1: Child demographics					
Child age (months)	-.06*	-.05	-.05	-.05	-.05
Child gender (female)	-.11*	-.11*	-.11*	-.11*	-.11*
Lang of assessment (English)	.01	.01	.01	.01	.02
Child attachment				-.12*	
Block 2: Family demographics					
Income-to-needs ratio		-.05	-.05	-.05	-.02
Maternal language (English)		.02	.02	.02	.03
<12 years ed (12 years as ref.)		.00	-.01	-.01	-.01
>12 years ed (12 years as ref.)		.03	.04	.04	.04
First generation (third generation as ref.)		.00	.01	.01	.01
Second generation (third generation as ref.)		.03	.04	.04	.04
Block 3: Teen parenting status					
Teen parent			.04	.06	.57*
Block 4: Interaction term					
Teen parent \times child attachment				-.12*	
Block 5: Interaction term					
Teen parent \times generation (first vs. second)					-.30*
Teen parent \times generation (first vs. third)					-.49*
Adj. R^2	.013	.011	.011	.028	.023
ΔR^2	.016*	.004	.001	.003*	.014*

* $p < .05$.

who applied for and received subsidies to attend child-care programs, 15% of mothers were 19 years of age or younger at the birth of their 3- to 4-year-old target child. These rates are higher than those reported in national samples for adolescents aged 15–19 years of age (7.6%) that include all ethnicities and income levels (National Campaign to Prevent Teen & Unplanned Pregnancy, 2011; Ventura, Abma, & Henshaw, 2010). In the study by Ventura et al., 40% of low-income women aged 20–24 had given birth before age 20, which is more than double the rate of teenage parenting found among the low-income sample in our study. Our rates may be higher than national estimates because national samples include higher income families among whom teenage childbearing is more rare. It is important to note that our 15% figure is no doubt an underestimate of the percentage of child-care-subsidy-receiving parents who gave birth to a child as a teenager, because we only examined age of the mother at the time of birth of the target child who was assessed for school readiness. We did not have knowledge of the presence of older siblings and the age of mother at their birth(s).

Of interest within this sample was whether the prevalence of teenage parenting among subsidy-receiving Latina mothers in Miami resembled national rates. Given existing literature showing higher teenage pregnancy rates in general for Latinas (Aneshensel et al., 1989; Brindis et al., 1995; Darabi et al., 1986; Nichols-Anderson, 2000), we expected to see the same pattern here. Interestingly, Latinas within our sample were less likely to be a teenage parent (15%) when compared with national rates, which state that over half (52%) of Latinas will become pregnant at least once before the age of 20 (National Campaign to Prevent Teen & Unplanned Pregnancy, 2008). It is also noteworthy that, within our larger Miami sample, the 15% rate of teen parenting for Latinas observed here was also

lower than that for African Americans (20%) and for Caucasians (23%).

Also, in contrast to national patterns, in the present study, first- and second-generation Latino families displayed much lower rates (6% and 8%) than did third-generation Latinas (29%). Similarly, Latina mothers who reported English as their primary language (26%) and who are possibly more acculturated had higher rates of teenage parenting when compared with moms who reported Spanish as their primary language (11%). These findings are consistent with the pattern known as the immigrant paradox, in which first-generation, less acculturated Latinos tend to fare better on a number of social, health, and educational outcomes than second and third generations (García Coll & Marks, 2012; Rodriguez, 2002; Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 1995). The sample of Latinas from the studies mentioned earlier was low-income teens of either Mexican or Mexican American descent in California, Puerto Rican descent living in Illinois, or Latinas (country not specified) living in Oklahoma or Missouri (Aneshensel et al., 1989; Brindis et al., 1995; Darabi et al., 1986; Nichols-Anderson, 2000; Olmeda, 2003). The present study was conducted in Miami-Dade County, where only about 3% of Latinos are Mexican American, compared with 50% Cuban, 11% South American, and 9% Central American (U.S. Census Bureau Report, 2007). Nationally, more Cubans obtain a college degree (32%) than Mexican (9%) or Puerto Rican individuals (15%; U.S. Census Bureau, 2004), and the median household income of Cuban families is higher (\$38,000) than that of Latinas as a whole (\$36,000). Poverty in Cuban-origin individuals under the age of 18 is also less frequent (13%) than for those in the overall Latino population (27%; U.S. Census Bureau, 2004). The differences in SES between Cuban Americans and other Latinos may account in part for the lower prevalence rate of Latina

teenage pregnancy in our (largely Cuban) sample. Clearly, Latinos are a heterogeneous group, and it would appear that low-income Hispanic families using child-care subsidies in Miami are less at risk for teenage parenting than other Latino groups nationally. Our sample is rather specialized and not intended to generalize to other Latino groups. Child-care-subsidy recipients might be savvy at using support systems and available services and, in turn, may be better able to provide their children with care. It is also important to keep in mind that our Latino sample did not include likely large numbers of Latino children in poverty who do not attend any type of child care or who attend informal or relative care, popular choices among certain Latino groups (Fuller, Holloway, & Liang, 1996).

Having a mother under the age of 20 at time of birth was significantly and uniquely associated with lower child cognitive and language skills at ages 3 and 4, even after accounting for a host of child and family demographic factors that are also associated with school readiness. Our findings are consistent with previous research that finds teenage parenting to be a risk factor specifically for young children's cognitive outcomes (Duncan et al., 1994; Moore, Morrison, & Greene, 1997; Moore & Snyder, 1991), likely because young mothers are less likely to engage with their young children in cognitively stimulating ways. Effect sizes for the effect of teen parenting on child school readiness were small but similar in size to those of other well-known and strong risk factors included in the models, such as family income. That teen parenting uniquely contributed this much to the prediction of child school readiness when demographic control variables were included is notable because our sample had a restricted range, given that it consisted of already at-risk, low-income, mostly single-parent families qualifying for child-care subsidies.

Teen parenting did not appear to have an independent effect on children's fine motor skills or social and behavioral skills, once other background variables were controlled. Maternal education and income-to-needs ratio continued to be related to these child outcomes, suggesting that SES may play a larger role in certain child outcomes than in others. For children born to teenage mothers, fine motor development may depend more on their income-to-needs status and whether they have access to materials that stimulate fine motor development, such as colored pencils and paper. There has been recent interest in young children's fine motor skills, as they have been found to be a unique predictor of children's early school success, above and beyond children cognitive skills (Grissmer, Grimm, Aiyer, Murrain, & Steele, 2010). Our results are consistent with research that is now finding that deficits in children's fine motor skills account for a meaningful part of the achievement gap between children in poverty and those with greater financial means, leading some to speculate that parents in poverty may not be engaging their young children as much in the kinds of joint activities (e.g., puzzles, beads, Legos, pencils, and crayons) that give young children opportunities to develop important fine motor skills (Chen, 2011; Potter, 2011). Our finding that children showed differences in social skills based on income-to-needs ratio in preschool classrooms is consistent with studies showing that children in poverty often struggle with demonstrating appropriate social skills and self-regulation

(Brooks-Gunn & Duncan, 1997; Duncan et al., 1994) and that this effect is largely mediated by poverty's negative effect on parenting stress and effective parenting strategies (Brown & Lynn, 2010; Hungerford & Cox, 2006; McLoyd, 1990; Meadows-Oliver et al., 2007). The additional stress and burden of teen parenting (Hungerford & Cox, 2006; National Institute of Child Health & Human Development Early Child Care Research Network, 2000) within this already low-income sample was not a unique risk factor for young children's emerging social skills after accounting for child and family demographic factors. It is important to stress that maternal primary language did not influence any child outcomes after accounting for the child's strongest language, suggesting that the quality of language stimulation provided by Latina mothers may be more important for child outcomes than the particular language that is spoken at home (Boyce et al., 2004; Yarosz & Barnett, 2001).

Maternal education (holding a high school diploma) did not interact with maternal teen parent status in predicting child school readiness outcomes, indicating that these factors operate cumulatively and that both are important for children's school readiness. Maternal education has long been known to be an important predictor of a diversity of positive child outcomes (Duncan et al., 1994; Halle et al., 1997). More educated mothers have more realistic (and greater) expectations about their children's capabilities and, in turn, are more apt to shape the home environment in a way that will foster healthy development (Alexander et al., 1994; Halle et al., 1997). Given that studies examining maternal education typically have broad samples across the entire spectrum of education levels and economic strata, it is impressive that we found notable maternal education effects even within our restricted range of a sample of already at-risk, subsidy-receiving, low-income families. Although maternal education did not interact with teen parenting, the mother completing high school was an important predictor of children's school readiness. Teenage mothers who stay in school are almost as likely to graduate from high school (73%) as their nonparent counterparts (77%); however, those who drop out before or shortly after giving birth are only half as likely (30%) to return to eventually graduate, compared with nonparent dropouts (60%), suggesting it is key to keep teenage mothers in school (Upchurch & McCarthy, 1990). Given the proportion of low-income teenage mothers that rely on financial assistance, welfare legislation requiring teen parents to stay in school in order to receive assistance is one incentive that could be used for young mothers to complete their high school education (Leven-Epstein, 1996). It is important to provide teenage mothers with the tools and resources needed to continue their education while caring for their children with the use of comprehensive school-based programs. School-based programs provide mothers with access to academic courses and reproductive health and family planning information, as well as skills training, financial assistance, and social services (Center for Assessment & Policy Development, 2002a, 2002b). Such programs that promote staying in school while promoting mother's developmental well-being and quality mother-child interactions are important and likely to make a difference in children's outcomes. It should be noted that, whereas school readiness differences were found between children of mothers who did and did not complete high school, no differences were

found between children of mothers who completed high school and those who completed some college.

Given the importance of attachment for a variety of child outcomes (Ainsworth, 1989; Bowlby, 1988) and evidence that parent-child attachment may be compromised among teen parents and their children (Meadows-Oliver et al., 2007; Ward & Carlson, 1995), we examined two possible roles that attachment could play in links between teen parenting and child school readiness. There was no evidence that parent-reported attachment with the child mediated relations between teen parenting and child outcomes. That is, although attachment itself was positively associated with child outcomes, it did not appear to explain why teen parenting was linked to poorer cognitive and language outcomes, because the teen parent effect remained when attachment was added to the models. On the other hand, evidence was found to support the idea that strong parent-child attachment serves as a buffer against the negative effects of teenage parenting—a moderating effect. In the context of high attachment ratings by the parent, differences in teacher-reported child socioemotional skills and behavior problems favoring those with adult (as opposed to teenage) mothers were smaller than when child attachment was lower. Teenage parenting was negatively associated with child social skills and behavior problems, but only when parent-reported attachment was relatively low. This finding suggests that programs for Latina teenage mothers should focus on parent-child attachment as a goal of intervention.

This article also examined the possibility that relations between teenage parent status and child school readiness would be different depending on family immigrant status or primary language. There were no interactions found between child (or mother) primary language (English or Spanish) and teen parenting when predicting child school readiness. However, we did find that relations between teen parenting and child language and fine motor skills and both teacher- and parent-reported behavior problems did vary somewhat on the basis of immigrant generation. These findings again highlight the importance of attending to moderating factors and subgroup differences when investigating the influence of teen parenting on children's educational outcomes. In some domains, such as language and fine motor skills, in the cultural context of Miami, being a recent immigrant served as a buffer for the negative effects of teenage parenting on these particular aspects of school readiness. That is, the negative effects of teen parenting on child language and motor skills were stronger for later generations. The pattern was not as clear, however, for the social and behavioral outcomes. Limited research exists on teen parenting among immigrant populations specifically, and its prevalence, especially among third+-generation Latino families, such as those in the present investigation, suggests that more research is needed.

It is important to consider potential cultural, language, and ethnic differences when designing interventions to reduce teen pregnancy and keep teen parents in school (Gilliam, 2007; Kotchick, Dorsey, Miller, & Forehand, 1999; Sterling & Sadler, 2009; Unger & Molina, 2000). Unique cultural and ethnic factors are certainly present in predicting teen childbearing (Gilliam, 2007; Sterling & Sadler, 2009; Unger & Molina, 2000) and in high school completion (Sterling & Sadler, 2009; Unger & Molina, 2000), and they also contribute to children's school readiness (August & Hakuta, 1997; Galindo & Fuller, 2010;

Schneider, Martinez, & Owens, 2006). Different family structures and support systems (i.e., the presence and availability of grandmother or grandparents to assist the teen parent) are likely somewhat responsible for the type of support a mother perceives and consequently the quality of care that she feels capable of providing for her child. This could vary by ethnic group and across different Latino groups. Such different family structures may be serving as buffers or risk factors for children's success. Further investigation of cultural aspects of teenage parenting would be beneficial to understand better how cultural elements, including family structure and rearing practices, contribute to early school success for children of young mothers. This may be especially true for Latina adolescent mothers, who are not only coping with parenthood at a young age but are also interacting in an environment that is different from their cultural heritage. Such mothers would benefit greatly from interventions that are culturally specific, as well as those that provide them with the necessary information and tools as students (and parents of students) to succeed in the United States (Arrendono & Castillo, 2011; Olmeda, 2003).

Limitations of the present study include the specialized and restricted nature of the sample—subsidy-receiving, low-income families attending child-care programs in Miami. Clearly, the intent here is not to generalize to other populations of teenage parents. However, it is important to examine such processes within unique and understudied Latino communities, such as Miami, Florida. Finally, it was unfortunate that because of the nature of the larger community project, we did not have additional, more detailed information about parent-child interactions, about other family processes occurring in the home, and about the kinds of parenting supports these teenage parents may have received from extended family members or others. Future research could certainly examine such factors in more detail to inform best practices for prevention, education, support, and intervention for Latina teenage mothers and their young children.

Keywords: teen parents; Latina parents; immigrant paradox; parent-child attachment; language development; school readiness; immigrant generational status; Miami-Dade County, FL

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